

**Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**

**Youth Education Services  
Gang Crimes Bureau**



**COMMUNITY**  
RESOURCE AND INFORMATION GUIDE

*GANGS, GRAFFITI & YOUTH*

**A Prevention and Intervention Tool for  
Southern Nevada Residents**

**[www.lvmpd.com](http://www.lvmpd.com)**



**LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN  
POLICE DEPARTMENT**

DOUGLAS C. GILLESPIE, Sheriff

*Partners with the Community*

## **FORWARD**

The vision of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is for Las Vegas to be the safest community in America. We wholeheartedly embrace our mission to protect the community through prevention, partnership, and professional service.

This publication is a collaboration of the Youth Education Services Detail, and the Gang Crimes Bureau's Prevention and Graffiti Crimes Sections. It is our goal to fully incorporate gang prevention and intervention efforts into policing and to strengthen existing youth prevention efforts. With the development of departments focusing on youth within the Metro family, we are committed to addressing the most serious choices, challenges and problems our youth face which include gang involvement & gang violence; weapons possession and weapons use; truancy and school dropout rates; drug abuse and underage drinking; and the peer pressure that can lead to all of the above. It is our hope to inform those who use this guide to contribute to the safety of all youth and families by encouraging continuing development of programs that focus upon the building blocks of character that we know work for youth. These building blocks include:

- Adult Role Models
- Building Community and Civic Responsibility
- Creating Commitment to Education
- Employment & Life Readiness
- Motivation & Leadership Training
- Peer Mentors
- Self Esteem & Social Competence Building
- System of Incentives and Rewards for Achievement
- Training and Outreach to Parents & Caregivers of Affected Youth



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At the end of this booklet you will find a list of resources. You can also access an updated listing on our web page **www.lvmpd.com**. The best intervention always starts with you and how you communicate. Don't forget to talk to the kids in your life about gangs, graffiti and how to solve problems by asking for help. Tell kids:

- . Report crime and suspicious activity
- . Remove gang graffiti from around your home
- . Know your neighbors
- . Organize or join neighborhood watch groups
- . Keep open communication
- . Ask for help

Remember to tell children that you disapprove of gangs and you don't want to see them hurt or arrested. We have also included the LVMPD, **ICARE Gang-Free Pledge**. We encourage you to review and sign it once you have had a talk with the kids in your life.

We wish to thank our vital community partners who work with the LVMPD daily to serve our children and youth.



Sergeant Mark Sharp  
Youth Education Services



Deborah Ann Reyes  
Community Outreach &  
Prevention Coordinator,  
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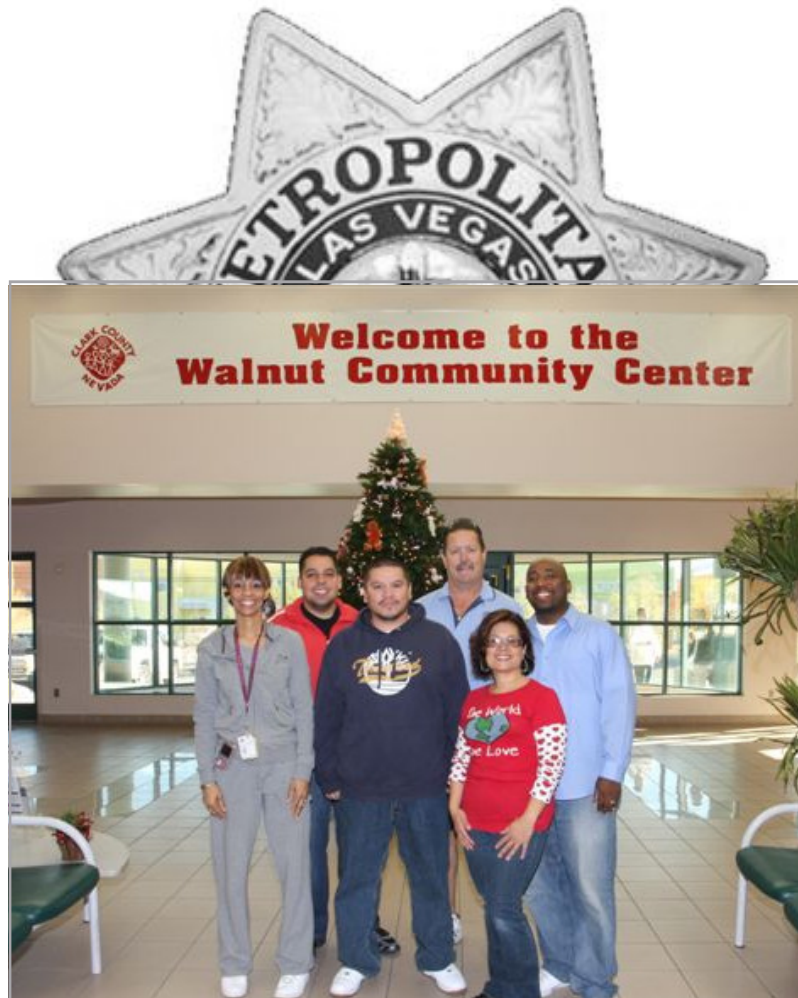
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COORDINATORS OF YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM LEFT TO RIGHT: YLONDA DICKERSON, STAVAN CORBETT, ALEX BERNAL, KEVIN NIDDAY, JAHMAD CANLEY, AND DEBORAH REYES

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# **CHAPTER 1**



## **THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DETECTION, PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

*Sharpening Your Skills as a Parent, Educator,  
Counselor, Mentor, Youth Advocate, & Student*

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## THE BACKGROUND

Gangs are territorial. Each gang has its own turf and graffiti marks its boundaries. The average age of gang members is from 14 to 21 years of age. However, gang members can also be as young as 8 or into their mid 30's. Recruitment into the gang usually starts in middle school where the age group is between 11 and 14. Most gangs target youth that are easily talked into doing work for the gang.

Many gangs adopt names that have significance in relationship to their neighborhoods (streets, parks, hills, valleys or housing projects). Anyone who does not belong to the neighborhood or who resembles a rival gang member may become the subject of attack. Gang members adopt nicknames that tend to fit the individual's physical or psychological characteristics. Most gang members, especially youngsters, are proud of their gang and freely admit their membership and dress in a style identifying their particular set. Their personal belongings are frequently covered in gang graffiti. Graffiti impacts our neighborhoods in many ways. Violence associated with gang graffiti is dangerous to the entire community. Innocent people are often subjected to gang violence by the mere presence of graffiti. Gang members often "shoot signs" which are hand and finger gestures used to identify their gang and communicate.

### Pop Culture, Technology and Gangs

Gangs are more than just kids being socially active and hanging out. **They are violent.** They will beat prospective gang members up to give them membership and "court" them for a while, convincing them to commit crimes. Once in a gang it is more difficult to leave, as loyalty is expected. Young teenage girls who associate with boys in gangs place themselves at risk for physical violence and sexual assaults. Also, there are groups called "PARTY CREWS." Party crews can become as dangerous as youth gangs. Be aware of your children's affiliations with such groups.

The recent glorification of gangs in popular culture presents significant challenges. Television, movies, and music display "gang culture" as glamorous. Gangs also use up-to-date social networks. Children and youth exposed to these images do not realize the dangers of the gang lifestyle until it is too late.





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**Take a Moment to Complete the Risk-Assessment**  
**Answer YES or NO to the following questions:**

<b>1</b> Is there graffiti in or near your neighborhood? <b>(5)</b>	<b>8</b> Has there been a 'drive-by' shooting in or around your community? <b>(14)</b>
<b>2</b> Have you observed graffiti crossed out and or written over? <b>(8)</b>	<b>9</b> Have you heard about or witnessed individuals displaying weapons in a threatening/menacing manner in or around your community? <b>(8)</b>
<b>3</b> Do the young people in your community wear gang colors and clothing, flash hand signs, or display other behaviors that may be gang related? <b>(10)</b>	<b>10</b> Have you witnessed an increase in school-aged youth being truant in your community? <b>(5)</b>
<b>4</b> Are drugs available in or near your community? <b>(10)</b>	<b>11</b> Have day-time burglaries been prevalent or increasing in your community? <b>(5)</b>
<b>5</b> Was there a significant increase in the number of physical confrontations within the past 12 months in or near your community? <b>(5)</b>	<b>12</b> Have racial incidents increased in your community? <b>(5)</b>
<b>6</b> Is there an increasing presence of weapons in your community? <b>(5)</b>	<b>13</b> Is there is a history of gangs in your community? <b>(10)</b>
<b>7</b> Are iPhones or cellular push-to-talk phones used by the young people in your community? <b>(3)</b>	<b>14</b> Is there an increasing presence of "informal social groups" with unusual names like: "Wood, GPK's or Squad-up, Killa Kids or Goonies?" <b>(7)</b>

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**Add up your "YES" scores only:**

0 - 20 points	=	No Problem
25 - 45 points	=	Emerging Problems
50 - 65 points	=	You Have Problems
70 + points	=	There are serious problems
At 50+ points	=	A need exists to develop a prevention and intervention strategy.

*Don't think that because someone is on the verge of joining a gang or is already a gang member that it is too late to establish positive, non violent and healthy alternatives!*



YOUTH EDUCATION HOSTS STUDENT ASSEMBLY

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## **GANG STATISTICS**

Increased gang membership over the last decade is most likely the result of gang recruitment efforts and the release of incarcerated gang members. In recent years, nationally and locally in Clark County, more comprehensive law enforcement reporting and improved gang awareness have contributed to an increase in the number of gang members identified by law enforcement agencies.

Gang membership in the United States was conservatively estimated at 1 million members as of 2010, based on analysis of federal, state, and local law enforcement reporting. According to state and federal corrections data more than 147,000 of those 1 million documented gang members are incarcerated in federal, state, and local correctional facilities. Also, of the 1 million gang members about 40% are juveniles (under 18) and 60% are adults. That means there are approximately 400,000 teenage gang members and 600,000 adult gang members. Of the 400,000 teenage gang members across the country, 32,000 of them are teenage girls.

### **LOCAL STATISTICS - GANGS IN CLARK COUNTY (to fill in during class)**

Gangs	_____
Members	_____
Affiliates	_____
Notes	_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

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**THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL:  
When Youth Exhibit Extreme Negative Behaviors  
They Are at Risk**

The following are examples of extreme behaviors consistent with that of gang affiliation and membership:

- Withdraws from family members; the gang becomes his/her family
- Breaks parental rules consistently/defiant
- Dramatic drop in grades
- Disciplinary problems at school
- Truancy
- Unexplained large sums of money
- Lack of hobbies or interests
- Interest in graffiti and tagging
- Possible use of alcohol and/or illegal and prescription drugs
- Hanging out with known or suspected gang members
- Dramatic change in friends
- Develops an unusual desire for privacy, i.e., will not let you into their bedroom
- Does not want you to meet their friends or know their real names
- Frequent negative contact with police/other authority figures
- Admits to gang membership

The above behaviors are very serious risk factors. If your kids are involved with any of the above, deal with these problems immediately. Denial that there is a problem or not dealing with the problem anticipating it will go away will only further expose a youth to danger. Early detection is the key.



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### Common Gang Traits

**Gang Clothing:** Gang members often wear clothing that is currently popular amongst youth in general. The wearing of certain clothing does not automatically make that person a gang member. However, a combination of the clothing worn, along with a certain a color scheme or the manner in which the clothing is worn can indicate membership in a gang. As gang members find out what clothing is becoming too noticeable to people, they may change what they wear. What is fashionable today, may not be tomorrow and gang members like to be stylish and set trends.

**Gang Tattoos:** Gang tattoos are the sign of a hardcore gang member. Individuals who mark themselves with gang writing have made a decision to stay in the gang for a long time. Besides tattooing, branding oneself with gang signs is a popular form of showing allegiance to their gang. Usually, the gang tattoo or brand are the same symbols or words used in gang-related graffiti.

**Gang Hand Signs:** The use of hand signs is a popular form of communication amongst street gangs. The hand sign usually identifies major gang affiliation the individual is a part of and the particular gang he/she is in. The hand sign is also a form of disrespect to rival gangs and has been the cause of gang violence. There have been cases reported where hearing impaired individuals using sign language to communicate have been mistaken for gang members and have been the victims of gang violence. Hand signs are usually unique to the gang and vary greatly. If you notice two groups of suspected gang members throwing hand signs at each other, get away from the group and notify the local authorities immediately.



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## HOW DO THEY GET IN?

The following are examples of how individuals are initiated into a gang.

**Rolled/Jumped/Lined In:** This is the most common form of initiation into a gang. This ritual usually consists of the recruit having to fight 3 or more members of the gang for a specified amount of time. The time limit can differ depending on the gang, but usually lasts between 15 seconds and 1 minute. The reason for the beating is to determine how tough the recruit is and if he is a fighter. "Lined in" is slightly different in that the gang has two lines of its members and the recruit has to go between the lines as gang members beat him or her. Often, officers are called to the homes of new gang members at the request of the parent to take assault reports. The child is often uncooperative and unwilling to tell the officer or his parent who his assailants are because he has just joined a gang.

**Courted In:** Sometimes an individual is asked to join a gang without going through a beating. The individual usually has some type of special talent that the gang wants to learn or take advantage of. The individual may have drug connections, is good at stealing cars, or has some other criminal talent. That the individual may have a car needed by gang.

**Walked In:** Some gangs have no formal initiation and may ask an individual to join.

**Sexed In:** It is not uncommon for females to be sexually passed around to all of the gang members to join the gang. Sometimes female recruits are required to roll dice to determine the number of gang members they will have sex with. These females become the victims of brutal sexual assaults that at times result in arrests.

**Commit Crimes:** Some gangs require that a recruit commit a crime or a series of crimes to prove that they are good candidates. Often times, gangs that specialize in a particular crime such as auto theft, will require the recruit to steal a car or commit the crime they specialize in. Some gangs have point systems for the crimes and the recruit has to earn a certain number of points. The crimes required to be committed can be as violent as drive-by shootings or murder.

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## **WHY DO YOUTH JOIN GANGS?**

Gangs are predatory towards children and youth and there are many different ways that they recruit new members. Many gang members say they have joined because the gang offered them support, caring, and a sense of order and purpose—all the things that most parents try to give their kids. The better you meet those needs, the less likely your kid will want to be in a gang.

### **There are Different Reasons for Different Kids To Join Gangs:**

- Lack of parental involvement
- Companionship and sense of belonging they do not receive in their own families
- Feeling of caring and attention in a gang—the gang becomes a surrogate family
- Low self esteem and lack of identity
- Looking for respect, power and the need to feel important
- To make money—to help out at home or to have nice clothes and things
- Parties, girls and drugs
- Self-protection because they are picked on by other gang members
- Some grow up in a neighborhood where joining a gang is considered a way of life
- Many have real or imagined problem(s) at home that make them prefer the streets (domestic violence, abuse)
- Drug and alcohol addiction
- Peer pressure







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## **CHAPTER 2**



**TERMS, DEFINITIONS, COMMUNICATION & WEAPONS**

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## WHAT IS A GANG?

### IN NEVADA WE USE THE FOLLOWING DEFINITION:

A group of 3 or more persons who unite under a common identifier (name, logo or style of dress) and engage in a pattern of criminal activity.

**Gang Member:** An individual who has been positively identified as being a member of a particular gang by law enforcement officers. Examples of positive identifiers are: self admittance, tattoos, behavior/associations, and information based on investigations/intelligence gathering. Additional identifiers can include:

- Reliable source or informant
- Wearing gang clothing
- Frequents gang area
- Affiliates with a gang and/or its members
- Use of gang signs/symbols
- Arrested with a known gang member
- Identified in a crime or intelligence report or any other official report of a law enforcement agency

**Affiliate:** An individual that meets one of the criteria as listed previously for identification as a gang member and/or associates with known gang members. There is a distinct risk of an affiliate being arrested for a crime by being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Gang associates are often involved in doing favors for gang-involved friends like stashing weapons, money etc. Gang affiliation is dangerous to youth and places them at risk to become participants in crime, or victims of crime.



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## GANG COMMUNICATION

Gangs communicate in different ways:

**Verbally:** They will use plain English, street slang or their native language.

**Hand Signs:** Some have taken the American Sign Language and modified it, sometimes creating their own signs. Using this method they are able to communicate with each other. Gang members will also use signing as a way to identify one another or to challenge rivals.

**Tattoos:** Gang members use tattoos in many ways. They are used to represent the specific gang they belong to. Also, gang tattoos can pay homage to dead fellow gang members. Tattoos are a form of non-verbal communication that cause fights amongst rivals.

**Graffiti:** When used by gang members it is not for artistic purposes. They use this form of communication to identify neighborhoods, honor dead gang members, challenge rivals, and to further promote their gang. Graffiti is also used as a form of advertising within the culture.

**Social Networking Websites:** In today's world with the evolution of social networks and computer websites, gangs can be found in cyberspace. They not only use all electronic means to communicate, but they are sophisticated and develop elaborate websites that are used to further promote their agenda and recruit members.



OFFICERS DAVINA RADER AND RICHARD BURRUS CONDUCT CLASS

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## WEAPONS

### Weapons

In any criminal organization, as with gangs, the use of weapons of all types is prominent. In addition to various firearms, gang members use knives, brass knuckles, bats, explosives, and other illegal weapons. They frequently obtain their guns from auto and residential burglaries. Many stolen guns are recovered after they have been used in a violent crime, including MURDER!



***Failure to properly secure your firearms can lead to serious criminal sanctions. Please be responsible, secure your gun(s) and keep them out of the reach of children at all times***



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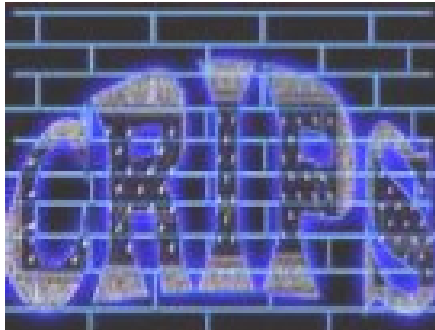
## **CHAPTER 3**



### **GANG DESCRIPTIONS**

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## BLACK



In Southern Nevada Black gangs comprise the second largest group of gangs by race. The origin of the Crips gang can be traced to Los Angeles, California, 1969. This gang affiliation grew from existing gangs in Los Angeles and is now a nationwide problem. Historically, the Crips were originally comprised of African American members. This has

changed over the years, and these gangs can be racially mixed or have no black members at all. Crips gangs are referred to as "sets" by gang members. These sets are unstructured, loose knit, and membership is usually not well defined. Structure differs from set to set based on the ethnic and racial makeup of different groups.

Crips organize themselves by age groups, with the younger groups (klik) in the gang looking up to the older members for guidance and advice.

Currently the Crips are aligned with other gangs such as the "Folk Nation."

The Crips are enemies of the "Bloods" and "People" gangs.

Shortly after the formation of the Crips, many of the gangs not associated with them formed their own alliances. The original off shoot gang was the Piru Street gang from Compton, California. Most of the original gangs that formed the rival Bloods went to Centennial High School in Compton.



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The Bloods adopted the Centennial school color which is red. The term Blood, still used to identify this alliance, grew out of the use of the color red. Many Blood sets will also use the word "Piru" to identify themselves. Bloods have grown into a nationwide affiliation as have the Crips.

Like the Crips, the Bloods also started as an African-American gang, but have many different culture and racial groups that have formed sets.

Nationally, the Crips outnumber the Bloods by 2½ to 1 and these groups are fierce enemies.



## HISPANIC

Hispanic gang members comprise the largest segment of gang population both locally (Clark County) and nationally. They have the longest history in the United States. Hispanic gangs have had a national presence since the early 1900's. California, (specifically the Los Angeles area), experienced an emergence of Hispanic gangs. To some extent, their structured formation in the 1950's, was due to economic conditions, prejudice and racism.

In Southern Nevada Hispanic gangs emerged in the mid 1970's. They were formed due to racial tensions and for protection from other gangs. Today we can still find some of the earliest local gangs formed, along with a large number of California-based gangs that reside and travel throughout the Las Vegas valley. Some prevalent Hispanic gangs include: MS-13, 18th Street, San Chucos, 28th Street, Barrio Naked City, and the Latin Kings.



In contrast to other gangsters, Hispanic gang members tend to be more proud of and open about their affiliations. Certain Hispanic gangs are not only nationwide, but global in their membership.



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## ASIAN

Asian gangs are not prevalent in Southern Nevada, but they have a significant history dating back to the 1970's.



Since that time, Asian gangs have been stereotyped as being present in the "Chinatown" of larger cities. It was believed that Asian gangs operated exclusively in a manner similar to tongs and triads which are names for organized crime. There are, however, several Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian and Hmong gangs that are active in communities throughout the country.

Asian newcomers have typically resided in communities with people from similar backgrounds due to cultural and language barriers. Asian

teenagers tend to band together for protection from other gangs. Asians gangs are unique in the that they adopt traditions from other dominant gangs, regardless of ethnicity. For example, if an Asian gang forms in a predominantly Hispanic/Latino neighborhood, the gang will inherit many of the trends that the Hispanic gangs use such as clothing style and graffiti.





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## WHITE EXTREMIST HATE GROUPS

Today, white extremist hate groups are monitored closely by law enforcement and anti-hate organizations. Law enforcement uses three categories to define hate groups:

- Skinheads, also known as “Skins”
- Aryan Resistance Movement (ARM)
- White Supremacy movement, i.e., the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)

The Skinhead movement originated in 1967, in England's working class neighborhoods. Later, supported by a racist offshoot of a music genre called “Oi!,” Skinheads began physically attacking members of minority groups. In the early 1990's, the Skinhead movement developed into three distinct groups:

- SHARPS (Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice)
- Neo-Nazi Skinheads
- Trads (Traditional Skinheads)

The common denominator of all three groups is the love of violence.

The White Supremacist movement promotes the view that whites are intellectually and morally superior to other races. Their usual targets have been African Americans and Jews. Recently, their focus has included other groups including Hispanics, Asians, and gays. While all Klan, Neo-Nazi, and similar “Identity” groups are White Supremacists by their nature, not all individuals who are White Supremacists are members of these organized groups.

It is important to note that sometimes whites who do not subscribe to white supremacy join Black, Hispanic or hybrid gangs.



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## HYBRID AND NON-TRADITIONAL

Hybrid gangs are newer generation youth gangs found throughout the country that present a substantial criminal and societal problem. Southern Nevada has a significant hybrid gang problem. Unlike traditional gangs based on race or neighborhood loyalty, the new generation of gangsters are devoted to making money through illegal activities such as drugs, robbery, and prostitution. Hybrid gangs consist of members from different racial/ethnic groups, and individuals participating in multiple gangs. These nontraditional gangs have unclear codes of conduct, and symbolic association with more than one gang. Hybrid gangs modify traditional gang culture with their personal interpretations and agendas. Two of the prominent hybrid gangs in Southern Nevada are "Squad Up" and the "Wood."

**SQUAD-UP AND WOOD:** Squad Up is one of the newest hybrid gangs in the Las Vegas valley. It was formed by many smaller street gangs which were at war with one another. Squad Up first appeared on the scene in 2005 and shocked many with their fights with much larger established gangs like the "Crips."

Some of the gangs that united were still rivals with one another and could not reach peace. The gang became plagued with infighting and violence. Soon a large number of Squad Up members lead a revolt and formed an entirely new hybrid gang known as "Wood." These two hybrid gangs now have an extremely violent rivalry in Southern Nevada.



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## JUGGALOS

In the early 1990s, the rap/horror music group, the “Insane Clown Posse” known as the “ICP” created a unique social group within its fan base.

This fan base, known as the Juggalos and Juggalettes (females), saw themselves as a family consisting of individuals who felt they were outcasts rejected by society. The ICP has an international fan base. In true subculture form, the Juggalo family has created it’s own lifestyle with slang/ language, symbolism and values system. They often paint themselves as clowns.

Juggalos are fans of ICP and of counter cultural music groups such as: “Inner City Posse,” “Detroit Rappers with a Twist,” “Violent J and Shaggy,” among others.



All Juggalos aren't gangsters, but some gangsters are Juggalos.

Juggalos come from many varied ages, races, and ethnic backgrounds. Basic identifiers include the use of “Hatchet Man” as a symbol (as seen below), Fago soda obsession, and music-related items. Some Juggalos have adopted gang-like behaviors and have engaged in criminal activities. They have been known to commit crimes including vandalism, assault, burglary, robbery, arson, and drug dealing.



*Parents of youth who are fans of the ICP and related bands need to be aware of the possible risks involved.*

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## **FEMALES IN GANGS**

The growing roles of females in gangs cannot be ignored. In Clark County the official statistics indicate that females comprise approximately 10-12% of gang membership, which is consistent with national trends. There are many more affiliates that are not counted as gang members. As a result of gang affiliation with males, teenage girls and women become criminals and victims of violent assaults, batteries, and sex crimes. Females assist male members in committing crimes and have been involved with:

- Dealing drugs
- Are forced to engage in prostitution
- Committing vandalism, credit card fraud, identity theft, and violent crimes
- Committing assaults, larcenies and intimidating other female gang members

Females also empower male gang members by:

- Carrying weapons, drugs, and cash
- Providing safe house for contraband
- Allowing gang members to use their vehicles
- Assisting in running criminal enterprises
- Providing unlimited organizational support to maintain their gang structure.

Clark County has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the country. Among the concerns is female gang affiliates and members who have children with gang members. Children born to parents who are gang members are at a very high risk to becoming gang members themselves.



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## **CHAPTER 4**



### **GRAFFITI: SOUTHERN NEVADA'S MOST COSTLY PROPERTY CRIME**

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## GRAFFITI OVERVIEW

Graffiti vandalism is the single most costly property crime our community faces. Each year more than 30 million dollars in public and private funds are expended fighting graffiti vandalism in the greater Las Vegas area. While the monetary cost of the property damage created by graffiti is an important issue there are additional considerations that cannot be ignored. First, graffiti vandalism invites crime and rapidly brings a neighborhood into a state of decay. This results in increased gang activity and crime. Second, when young people become involved in graffiti activity they will often become involved in other types of crime.

Visible graffiti vandalism in a neighborhood sends a message to residents who reside there. It says that the criminal element is welcomed and that law-abiding citizens are not safe. Graffiti is threatening to citizens because it is an unwanted intrusion into their community. This is why it is critical to remove graffiti immediately. When graffiti is allowed to remain it will invite more graffiti and the crime that always accompanies it will flourish.



The LVMPD Gang Crimes Bureau maintains a Graffiti Investigations Section and utilizes specialized detectives who investigate taggers and tag crews.

In the past ten years, local law enforcement officers have made thousands of arrests of graffiti vandals. Many of these arrests were of juveniles.

Since 2001, police have arrested graffiti vandals for drug-related offenses, burglaries, armed robberies, home invasions, and murders. Graffiti is a "gateway crime." When a youth gets involved in graffiti they are at risk to commit more serious crimes.



Report graffiti in progress call 911

Graffiti removal 455-4509

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## WHY THEY TAG

The primary motivation of graffiti vandals is fame. Fame is a term graffiti vandals use to describe the attention and recognition they receive from other vandals, the public and law enforcement. Some vandals actually enjoy being arrested because it increases their status and reputation in the local "graffiti scene." They frequently use internet social networking sites to promote themselves and place photos of their damage.

Some believe graffiti vandals are merely artists who are attempting to express themselves and display their work. While there are many talented mural artists who place legal work in public, it is important to remember that graffiti vandals purposely break the law and destroy property.

### Type of Graffiti

**Gang Graffiti:** Graffiti is used by criminal street gangs for the purpose of communication and marking territory. Gang graffiti is most common in gang dominated neighborhoods and other areas frequented by gang members. It is usually legible but encoded in such a way that most citizens are not able to understand it. When gang graffiti is crossed out and another writing is added, then rival gangs are having a dispute and are sending specific messages.

**Tagger Graffiti:** Tagger graffiti is placed by vandals or "taggers." It is the most prevalent type of graffiti and comprises more than 90% of all visible graffiti in Southern Nevada. Most taggers belong to groups of graffiti vandals called "tag crews." The primary motivation of a tag crew is to deface as much property as possible with graffiti in an effort to gain fame for the crew and the individual members. Because of their structure and activities, tag crews are considered criminal gangs by law enforcement.

Most active taggers are 13-30 years of age and come from various backgrounds. While most high-dollar graffiti damage is caused by adults at least half of all visible graffiti in our community is placed by juveniles. Vandals as young as 10 have been identified as well as an increasing number of female juveniles.



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### What Should I Do If My Kid is a Tagger?

If your son or daughter is younger than 18 and involved in graffiti you have a lot to lose if they are arrested. In the state of Nevada, parents can be held liable for damage caused by their children.

Convicted graffiti offenders are subject to fines, restitution, community service, probation, loss of driving privileges and incarceration.



### Parenting Tips

- Look in your child's room and inspect his or her belongings
- Check for graffiti-style posters and magazines in their bedrooms
- Check for cans of spray paint and large markers
- Make sure your child is not using a notebook to practice graffiti-style writings
- Be aware if your child uses a nickname that he or she has not used before

### What You Can Do To Fight Graffiti

As a citizen who wishes to take action there are several things you can do to protect your neighborhood from graffiti vandalism:

- If you observe a graffiti vandal in the act of defacing property call 911 and do not approach the vandal
- Serve as a good witness until officers arrive and then assist them once the situation is safe
- If you know the identity of a graffiti vandal contact the police
- If the crime is no longer in progress, file a police report at the substation. (You must be the owner of the property to make the report)
- To remain anonymous contact Crime Stoppers of Nevada at **385-5555** or go online at **[www.crimestoppersofnv.com](http://www.crimestoppersofnv.com)**





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- To report graffiti on public property and request removal contact the **Southern Nevada Graffiti Hotline** at **455-4509**
  - Join the **Neighborhood Pride Zone Program** that provides paint and graffiti-removal supplies free of charge to cover graffiti as soon as it appears in your neighborhood.

### **THE SOUTHERN NEVADA GRAFFITI COALITION**

The Southern Nevada Graffiti Coalition (SNGC) is a networking organization comprised of local law enforcement officials and publicly employed graffiti-abatement specialists. It was formed in 1995 with the mission of coordinating anti-graffiti activities between local law enforcement and the graffiti abatement employees of Clark County and Las Vegas. It is managed by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

The activities of the SNGC include implementation of the state of Nevada's annual Graffiti Free Nevada Month, the annual DARE Anti-Graffiti Art Contest, and several neighborhood graffiti clean-up projects. Up-to-date graffiti information is also provided to the community through the SNGC's bi-monthly newsletter, "Facebook" page, and via "Twitter."





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## **CHAPTER 5**



**RESOURCES TO KEEP OUR YOUTH  
GRAFFITI, VIOLENCE & GANG FREE**

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## YOUTH EDUCATION SERVICES

# Y.E.S.

The Youth Education Services Detail provides various educational programs for children and adults. Programs include gang prevention, school violence awareness, bullying and cyber bullying, over-the-counter drugs and summer programs at various community centers and facilities.



LEFT TO RIGHT: OFFICER DAVINA RADER, SERGEANT MARK SHARP,  
OFFICERS I. "IKY" WILLIAMS AND RICHARD BURRUS



DEPUTY CHIEF GARY SCHOFIELD AND SERGEANT MARK SHARP  
SHARE LUNCH AT MARC KAHRE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



SERGEANT MARK SHARP TEACHES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY

We recognize that prevention requires the identification of youth at risk at the earliest possible age, and believe that successful efforts require a broad scope of services that address all of the perils youth face. We thank the following partners for their tireless work on behalf of youth. We encourage you to reach out to these valuable organizations and programs that serve the Southern Nevada community. Please check our listing on the **LVMPD.com** website for changes and additions.

- 10,000 kids, Inc. .... (702) 387-1010  
[www.10000kids.org](http://www.10000kids.org)
- Barry's Boxing Center: ..... (702) 368-2696  
[www. Barrysboxingcenter.com](http://www.Barrysboxingcenter.com)
- Boys and Girls Club of Las Vegas ..... (702) 367-2582  
[www.bgclv.org](http://www.bgclv.org)
- CLV Parks Recreations (702) 229-6297 and Neighborhood Svcs ..... (702) 229-2330  
[www.lasvegasnevada.gov/Government/parks\\_neighborhood.htm](http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/Government/parks_neighborhood.htm)
- Clark County Depart of Parks and Recreations ..... (702) 455-8200  
[www.clarkcountynv.gov](http://www.clarkcountynv.gov)
- Clark County, Family Mediation Center ..... (702) 455-4186  
[www.clarkcountycourts.us](http://www.clarkcountycourts.us)
- Clark County, Parks and Recreation, Gang..... (702) 455-7067  
Intervention Back On Track Program
- Clark County, School Dist: Stay in School Mentoring Project ..... (702) 799-6560  
[www.ccsd.net/partnership/stay.php](http://www.ccsd.net/partnership/stay.php)
- Coroner Visitation Program ..... (702) 455-3210  
[www.accessclarkcounty.com](http://www.accessclarkcounty.com)
- Gang Talks Forum, Prevention Section, Gang Crimes Bureau ..... (702) 828-3309
- End Violence Now ..... 1-800-672-5371  
[www.endviolencenow.org](http://www.endviolencenow.org)
- Nevada Youth Alliance..... (702) 393-6163  
[www.nevadayouthalliance.org](http://www.nevadayouthalliance.org)
- Partnerships for Youth at Risk ..... (702) 267-2284  
[www.partnershipsfor youthatrisk.org](http://www.partnershipsfor youthatrisk.org)
- Project 5000 Kids ..... (702) 636-2360  
[www.project5000kids.org](http://www.project5000kids.org)
- Southern Nevada Police Athletic League ..... (702) 328-6297  
[www.snpal.com](http://www.snpal.com)
- Rape Crisis Center ..... (702) 366-1640  
[www.therapeccrisiscenter.org](http://www.therapeccrisiscenter.org)
- Richard Steele Health & Wellness Community Center ..... (702) 638-1308
- S.A.F.E. House ..... (702) 451-4203  
[www.safehousenv.org](http://www.safehousenv.org)

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## COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY

- Symbolic Art .....(702) 610-4099  
[www.symbolicartcenter.com](http://www.symbolicartcenter.com)
- The Embracing Project .....(702) 994-0585  
[www.TheEmbracingProject.org](http://www.TheEmbracingProject.org)
- Las Vegas Indian Center .....(702) 647-5842  
[www.lasvegasindiancenter.org](http://www.lasvegasindiancenter.org)
- Latino Town Hall.....(702) 287-1859  
<http://latinotownhall.com>
- Luz Community Development Coalition .....(702) 734-0589  
[www.luzcoalition.org](http://www.luzcoalition.org)
- Nurse Family Partnership, Southern Nev Health District.....(702) 759-0779  
[www.nursefamilypartnership.org](http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org)
- Westcare .....(702) 385-2090  
[www.westcare@westcare.com](http://www.westcare@westcare.com)
- Workforce Solutions, YouthBuild Las Vegas .....(702) 636-2322
- Youth "Eternal" Educating Teens and .....(888) 239-3663  
Effectively Reaching Areas of Learning  
[www.youtheternal.org](http://www.youtheternal.org)



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Detective Bernard "B.J." Plaskett - Officer Davina Rader  
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Sergeant Mark Sharp - Officer I. "Iky" Williams

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## NOTES



## NOTES

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT



**I C A R E**  
**GANG-free PLEDGE**



I, \_\_\_\_\_ **pledge** to not use bad language, and respect myself, my body, my friends, my teachers, my family, and people who are different from me. I pledge not to smoke cigarettes, use drugs, and drink alcohol.

**I pledge** not to lie, cheat, steal, join gangs, and get into fights.

**I promise** to talk to my parents before I decide to get a tattoo, shave my head, change my hair, join a club, or group.

**I will** not hang around gangs, attend gang parties, talk to gang members, or act like a gang member.

**I will** not throw up hand signs, or use gang slang that could put me in danger.

**I will** avoid gang colors and dress.

**I will** not tag or have anything to do with graffiti anywhere - - in my personal stuff, at home, school, or in my community. I know graffiti and tagging is disrespectful to my community and illegal.

**I will** ask before I use a computer, video games, cell phone or TV. I won't do bad things with technology like bully other kids. I will stay away from gang websites, and I won't ask gang members to be my friends on networking websites like "Facebook" or "MySpace." I will listen carefully to music lyrics, and avoid songs or videos that hype up gang life, "gangstas," celebrate violence, or disrespect others.

**I will** choose friends who make good choices. I will let my parent(s) know who all my friends are and where they live.

**I will** ask advice if my friends ask me to do something I am uncomfortable with or that I think is wrong.

**I will** tell my parent(s) if I get asked to join a gang.

**I will** do my best to fix any problems that I have and I will ask my parents, teachers, police officers, or other adults for help.

**I will** remember the 5 "ICARE" values of:

**INTEGRITY • COURAGE • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPECT • EXCELLENCE**

as a guide to live a graffiti, gang and violence free life in order to become my best self.

**I will** choose family, school, and community over gangs.

Youth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **PARENT/GUARDIAN**

**I (we) pledge** to help you and your school, your activities and your choices as you grow up.

**I (we) will** talk with you and will not turn you away or make fun of you when you ask for help.

**I (we) promise** to be in your business at all times, and to care about where you go and whom you hang out with.

**I (we) will** do my best to provide you with a safe and happy home, even when times are hard.

**I will** do everything I can to keep you safe from gangs and gang activity.

**I (we) will** try to be a good example for you, and point out when you make good choices.

**I (we)** promise to **love** you no matter what.

Parent/Caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**JOIN WITH OTHERS TO MAKE AND KEEP YOUR COMMUNITY  
SAFE FROM GANGS AND GRAFFITI**

- Know your neighbors
- Organize or join neighborhood watch groups
- Report crime and suspicious activity
- Remove graffiti from around your home
- Attend community functions
- Teach your children civic pride

<b>Graffiti Hotline</b>	<b>455-4509</b>
<b>Gang Crimes Bureau</b>	<b>828-3309</b>
<b>Youth Education Services</b>	<b>828-3508</b>
<b>Clark County School District Police</b>	<b>799-7830</b>



**LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
Phone: 702-828-3111